claims 1, 4 and 6. Claims 22-28 find support in original claims 7, 5, 11, 12, 8, 9, and 10, respectively. No new matter has been added.

Objections to Drawings

The Examiner objected to the drawings under 35 C.F.R. §1.83(a), stating that they failed to show clearly the relationship between the free end 12 and the board 8 as described in the specification. In response, applicants have amended Figs. 4 and 5 to show that the free end 12 deflects upward (relatively speaking) when the board 8 is inserted into the card edge receiving slot 7. Applicants submit that this amendment overcomes the Examiner's objection to the drawings.

Matters of Formality

The Examiner rejected claims 3 through 9 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to clearly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention.

With respect to claim 3, the Examiner stated that the limitation regarding the contact compliance is indefinite because, for a given connector, there would be no way to determine whether the limitation would be satisfied except through extensive experimentation. In response, applicants submit that this limitation is not indefinite, however, to facilitate prosecution, applicants have nevertheless canceled the claim.

With respect to claims 4 through 9, the Examiner stated that the limitations regarding the "RJ standard" are indefinite because "the RJ standard may have been subject to change in the past and may change in the future." Consequently, the Examiner gave no weight to

recitations involving the RJ standard. In response, applicants respectfully submit that the term "RJ standard" is clearly defined in the specification in such a way that it is not affected by changes as the RJ standard evolves over time. Specifically, on page 1, line 28 through page 2, line 9, an exacting description of the "RJ standard" is given which ties the standard to a particular time. Therefore, the term "RJ standard" as used herein is defined at a particular time, and, thus, is not subject to change as the Examiner suggests. Applicants respectfully urge the Examiner to reconsider his rejection with respect to these claims.

Prior art Rejections

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, and 13-15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Laitly, U.S. Patent No. 6,116,962, (herein "Laitly"). Specifically, with respect to original claim 2, which recited a slot for receiving a card edge of a PCB, the Examiner stated the housing of Laitly has a rear side defining a slot which is suitable for receiving an edge of a circuit board. In response, applicants submit that Laitly is devoid of any teaching or suggestion of a housing having a card edge receiving slot as set forth in the claimed invention. Applicants realized that by securing the rear sections of the contacts to the housing, the connector can be synergistically provided with a card-edge connector configuration. Card edge connectors are desirable from the standpoint of simplicity since the slot provides the necessary alignment for the card to mechanically and electrically connect to the connector housing in a single motion.

On the other hand, Laitly does not define a slot, but rather a butting surface 196 (Figure 12) or 320 (Figure 22), which seats on the PCB. There is no teaching or suggestion of modifying this surface to form a slot to receive the edge of the board. To the contrary, Laitly

clearly indicates the desirability of locating pins 198 projecting from the abutting surface which are received by corresponding holes in the PCB to precisely position the connector block relative to the PCB. (Col. 7, ll. 33-39). The embodiment of Figure 22 has similar locating pins 328 (Col. 9, ll. 2-5). Therefore, the alignment approach in Laitly clearly requires that the connector block be secured to the PCB by surface mounting rather than by card edge connecting. Modifying Laitly to have a card edge receiving slot would alter its principle of operation, and, thus, there can be no motivation to do so. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection and allow the claims as amended.

With respect to claim 3 through 12, the Examiner rejected them under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Laitly as in claim 1. Specifically, the Examiner stated that "regarding the relative dimensions and strengths of the contact, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that the contact inventions could be varied. The suggestion or motivation for doing so would have been for example to improve durability and to obtain desired compliance, such motivations being well known in the art."

In response, with claims 4-12 and new claims new claims 21-26, which recite deviations from the RJ standard, applicants submit that it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to vary these dimensions as suggested by the Examiner. To the contrary, *it is counterintuitive to deviate from a standard to improve the performance of the article governed by the standard.* By decreasing the material of each contact, applicants have unquestionably compromised the normal force that the contact can deliver to an RJ plug inserted into the receptacle. It is not obvious that an increase in durability and compliance of

the contacts is worth this reduction in normal force. Again, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider his position with respect to the claims and withdraw the rejection.

Conclusion

In light of the above remarks, an early allowance of the claims is earnestly solicited.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

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APPENDIX B

MARKED UP VERSION OF CLAIMS

1. (Amended) A modular jack connector assembly comprising:

a dielectric housing having a front and rear orientation and defining at least one receptacle adapted for receiving an RJ standard compliant mating plug; [and]

a plurality of contacts disposed in said housing, each contact being secured to a rear portion of said housing, each contact extending forward from said rear portion to a free end such that a portion of said contact forward of said rear portion electrically connects with a mating plug when the mating plug is received within said receptacle; and

wherein said housing defines a slot traversing said contacts and being suitable for receiving an edge of a circuit board, and wherein a connection portion of each contact extends from said rear portion of said housing into said slot such that when said housing is mounted to a circuit board a portion of said connection portion makes contact with the circuit board.

Delete claim 2.